# VA/DoD Clinical Practice Guideline Management of Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) in Adults: Outpatient Mental Health Specialty Setting

#### 1. Evaluate for serious immediate needs

Dangerousness, unsafe living situation, substance abuse, psychosis, untreated medical condition - handle as needed before continuing MDD assessment and treatment

#### 2. Assess for MDD

• Use DSM-IV criteria for diagnosis; include other testing as needed (e.g. Beck Depression Inventory, CES-D)

Assess for depressive episode. 5 or more of "sig-e-caps" for at least two weeks (1 or 2 of the 5 symptoms must be  $\checkmark$  interest and/or depressed mood)

Sleep ( $\blacktriangle$  or  $\checkmark$ ), Interests ( $\checkmark$ ), Guilt, Energy ( $\checkmark$ ), Concentration ( $\checkmark$ ), Appetite ( $\blacktriangle$  or  $\checkmark$ ), Psychomotor changes ( $\blacktriangle$  or  $\checkmark$ ), Suicidal ideas.

Assess current MDD treatment if patient referred from other provider: adherence, response, and side effects

### 3. Provide education, discuss treatment options, and jointly choose therapy

Educate patient and, if appropriate, family

Discuss options: Empirically supported psychotherapy; medication; combination

### 4. Provide therapy as planned with patient and interdisciplinary team

Evaluate patient response every 1-2 weeks

If no improvement in 6 weeks, reevaluate, considering other MDD treatments and possible undiagnosed comorbid conditions

If improving, continue current treatment up to 12 weeks

## 5. Expected remission around 12 weeks after initiation of therapy

If remitted at 12 weeks, institute maintenance plan

If improving, but not remitted, continue therapy with timetable for expected remission If not improving or not remitted after expected time exceeded, reevaluate, considering other MDD treatments and possible undiagnosed comorbid conditions

VA access to full guidelines: http://www.oqp.med.va.gov/cpg/cpg.htm DoD access to full guidelines: http://www.cs.amedd.army.mil/Qmo

Sponsored & produced by the VA Employee Education System in cooperation with the Offices of Quality & Performance and Patient Care Services and DoD.

November 2001

